

Review of King Probe Finds Ray Acted Alone

Washington (News Bureau) — A Justice Department task force said that the "sum of all the evidence" points to James Earl Ray's being the sole killer of civil-rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. but conceded it has been unable to find out where Ray got the money to escape abroad after he killed the Rev. Dr. King on April 4, 1968.

The task force report also concludes that the FBI was not implicated in the Rev. Dr. King's slaying and that the bureau's investigation of the assassination was thorough and honest.

The task force's conclusions, made public yesterday, immediately came under fire from the Rev. Dr. King's widow, Mrs. Coretta King, and the civil-rights leader's associates. "We don't have any faith in that report because it seems the FBI and the Justice Department, to a degree, were involved in the assassination or the events surrounding it," said Tyrone Brooks, a spokesman for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Questions Inquiry's Sufficiency

Mrs. King's told reporters in Atlanta that she would "like for some agency to disclose... whether the Justice Department made a sufficient inquiry and could find their conclusions convincing."

The task force, which was set up by former Attorney General Edward H. Levi to clear up questions about the FBI harassment of the Rev. Dr. King and the investigation of his death, said the evidence virtually rules out the possibility of a conspiracy to kill him.

"The sum of all the evidence of Ray's guilt points to him so exclusively that it most effectively makes the point that no one else was involved," the report said, commenting on the task force's review of more than 200,000 FBI documents and its interviewing of 40 witnesses.

"Of course," the report added,

"someone could conceivably have provided him (Ray) with logistics or even paid him to commit the crime. However, we have found no competent evidence upon which to base such a theory."

As for the FBI investigation, the task force said the bureau failed to check some leads which might have erased some lingering mysteries about the case. Among these was the possibility that one or both of Ray's brothers might have helped him escape from the Missouri State Prison in 1967.

The report said, however, that it was understandable that the FBI would concentrate on catching the killer and would put aside leads about his activities before the assassination.